

My Life and Achievements

JoAnn (Lucas) Galbraith

I was born in my grandfather's house in Middlemiss on April 19, 1937. From 1937-2020, I spent my entire life within the hamlet of Middlemiss. I listened to and learned the life history of my Lucas family from my relatives some of whom were born in the 1850's.

In 1960 my husband and I purchased a house in Middlemiss which was built in 1890 for my great-grandmother Annie Zimmerman Lucas. There we raised our five children. I lived there for 60 years before moving to a senior's apartment complex in Melbourne.

1960 - 2002 – I was a member of the Middlemiss Hall board and community club. In 2002, the municipality took over ownership of the school/hall property and in 2022 is a small parkette.

1976 – I spearheaded the 100th Anniversary Celebration of the hamlet of Middlemiss.

My career as a writer for area newspapers began. I wrote for the Mt. Brydges Bulletin, The Glencoe Transcript and Free Press, The Strathroy Age Dispatch. The last newspaper – The Lambton Middlesex Standard E-edition which printed my weekly correspondence ceased publication in October 2022. Ending a 46-year career.

1977 – I inherited genealogy of a family tree "Lucas" that covered an era from 1784-1937.

1978 – I joined the Glencoe and District Historical Society. In my 44 years with the Society, I have held numerous positions. As a life and charter member, my position in 2022 is a Director.

Late 1970 – 80's – I was a 4-H Homemaking leader. I taught young girls in the 4-H Club sewing and cooking. I also taught adult 4-H classes in cooking and quilting.

1980 – I established a History Award for Grade 8 graduating student at Caradoc South Public School. Also, a grade 4 – 8 History Project Award associated with the Melbourne Fair until the public school closed.

1983 – I submitted information and genealogy for the history of Antler, Sask. - Stephen's family (one of the lineages of my husband's family)

1984 – I published a genealogy booklet "Family of Charles and Annie (Zimmerman) Lucas"

1985 – I submitted the information for the families of Charles and Annie Lucas for the publication of "Loyalist Legacy" by Dodie Brown, the descendants of Robert and Phoebe (Scott) Land. Robert & Phoebe are my great, great, great-grandparents on my father's lineage.

1989 - I published a genealogy booklet "Henderson's of West Nissouri," including 25 years of records of family reunions, a lineage of my mother's.

2

I was credited with supplying genealogy of Grahams of Blackstock, a family lineage of my mother's for "Emerson, Gardiner and Best" published in New York state.

I became a member of the West Elgin Genealogy & Historical Society.

I was asked to sit on the board to establish a Museum of Ekfrid Township in Appin. In 2022, I am still a member of the Museum board.

1990 – Published the "History of Middlemiss."

I supplied the name "Townline Terrace," for the senior's apartment complex in Melbourne in which I took up residency in 2020.

1997 – I became a member of APOLROD, an association for the preservation of Ontario Land and Registry Documents. Through that organization, the Glencoe and District Historical Society can house the Original Land Registry Records for what is now the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex, including the abstracts, copies of mortgages, wills, land transactions etc. which are in the resource rooms in Glencoe, Ontario.

1998 – I was involved with the 100th Anniversary celebration of the Melbourne Public/Continuation School.

2000 – I assisted in an updated publication of the "History of the Melbourne Methodist/United Church," and was appointed Church historian, a position I still hold in 2022.

I became involved with the Upper Thames Valley Re-enactment Society in holding a Memorial Service at the battle site on Longwoods Road to honour the British and American troops who lost their lives at the site on March 4, 1814, which is held yearly. As part of the service, I have laid a wreath on behalf of the Land and Lucas veterans who fought in the 1812-14 war.

2001 – I was presented an Ontario Heritage Community Recognition Certificate & pin. A municipality can recognize an individual who has made a significant contribution to build culture and natural preservation within the community. I was nominated by what was the Township of Ekfrid.

2002 – I oversaw and chaired the Antique and Historical display set up at the International Plowing Match held in Glencoe.

I retired as a Home Support worker for Para-Med Health Services, a branch of Extendicare.

2003 – I published a history book on Melbourne, Ontario, "A Split Village at a Crossroad."

2004 – I was selected as Melbourne Citizen of the Year, awarded to me by the Melbourne Lions Club.

I accepted a four-year term on the Strathroy Museum Collections Committee.

I joined the VON, as a volunteer driver and began driving for Elgin/Middlesex Unit of the Cancer Society. For a number of years, I also dispatched for the Cancer Society in the surround rural area.

2005 – I joined the Melbourne Women’s Institute, as a branch director on the executive committee. I was involved with public relations and worked with adding information to the Institutes Tweedsmuir books.

2007 – I was approached by the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex to represent Museums of SWM and the Historical Society at a group meeting consisting of members from the counties of Middlesex, Huron & Perth to form a museum network group. The group met four times a year with representatives from museums, historical societies and other historical institutions attending. At one time there were approximately 40 museums, historical societies, and institutions who gathered and swapped ideas as well as promote and lend artifacts. In 2007, Middlesex County proposed a project of a Heritage Trail throughout the county. Of the seventeen plaques, I supplied information for three.

Following a bout with cancer, my late husband Jack, was presented with a stuff groundhog, “Middlemiss Mike.” Groundhog Day celebrations in Melbourne were established and have been a great source of entertainment for fifteen years.

2008 – I received a Caregivers Recognition Award, “a thank you for your skill and compassion as a dedicated caregiver, your home truly made a difference” from Southwest Community Care Access Centre part of “Celebrating Hero’s in the Home,” by VON.

2010 – The Glencoe Train Station was inducted into the American Hall of Fame due to the Glencoe and District Historical Society forming a LACAC group. With aid from the Glencoe Rotary Club and volunteer labour, the old station was purchased, restored, and moved it it’s present site.

I was involved in the 100th anniversary of the Melbourne Agricultural Society and Fair Board.

2011 – On February 25, I was presented by the Lieutenant Governor, David Onley, a Lieutenant Governor’s Heritage Award for Lifetime Achievement (certificate & pin) at Queen’s Park in Toronto. The municipality of Southwest Middlesex nominated me for the award. On the certificate it reads, “presented to JoAnn Galbraith in appreciation of a lifetime of volunteer work to identify, preserve, protect and promote our province’s rich heritage.”

2012 – I published a second book on the village of Melbourne - A Split Village Encore, “How the Milling Industry Influenced the Village of Melbourne. “

2013 – I joined the Strathroy Historical Society.

2014 – I received a local Heritage Award from the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex.

2015 – I received a Celebrating and Impact in the Community Award from the Ontario Division of the Canadian Cancer Society.

I joined the Westminster Historical Society.

I published a small booklet titled, "A Lot About a Lot." The booklet covers the history of one lot of property just north of the hamlet of Middlemiss, of the families, businesses, and life on the property.

2018 – I received a 40-year volunteer service award from the Ministry of Culture, Citizenship and Recreation due to my 40-years a Charter & Life Member of the Glencoe and District Historical Society. Previously I received the same award for 5, 10, 15, 20 and 30 years with the society.

2019 – I was asked by the Royal Canadian Legion Branch #510 to assist them in Celebrating their 70th anniversary. In 2022, I am an affiliate member and am on the executive committee.

I received a 15-year Volunteer Service Award from the Elgin-Middlesex Cancer Society and resigned from volunteer driving.

2020 – I received a certificate that I am a direct descendant of Clement Lucas. UEL presented it at a monthly meeting of the London, Western Ontario Branch of the United Empire Loyalist Association of Canada.

I resigned as a volunteer driver and delivery meals on wheels due to COVID and moving from the hamlet of Middlemiss where I lived for 83+ years.

2021 – I received "virtually" a 15-year Volunteer Award from the Victoria Order of Nurses. Today I am part of the "chat line" communicating with shut ins in their homes.

2022 – I was approached by the Municipality of Southwest Middlesex for my assistance in renaming a street in the hamlet of Middlemiss. Through numerous phone calls with the Mayor, Deputy Mayor of SWM, Councilors, the road Superintendent and Middlesex County on July 27th, they named the street "JoAnn" in my honour.

Over the years I have been a member and very involved with several fair boards, entering exhibits and I am a qualified fair judge in District 13 of the Ontario Association of Agriculture. For a number of years, I did numerous speaking engagements – my subjects were "History of the Area, my family lineages, their ties, their similarities, and how multi-cultural families are."

Many of the descendants of my Land, Lucas and Zimmerman lineage have been founding members of historical societies, loyalist societies, historians, authors, archivers, the arts, medical field, music, and other endeavors: My life in the past, the present and in the future, my passion for collecting genealogy and my interest in history, my volunteering, my dedication, has it been a legacy passed down or was it my destiny. Over the years, I have not let the grass grow under my feet, as the ^{old} saying goes, as a wife, mother, grandmother, and great-grandmother.